

Chapter 6: Supervising SROs

While the focus of this chapter is on how to supervise SROs, a few supervisors contacted for this study indicated that they do not need to spend much, if any, time monitoring their SROs.

- Some supervisors believe that they have placed experienced, self-motivated officers in the position who can work entirely on their own. One supervisor said, "There is little need to monitor the SROs closely because most of them have been in the department for 12-14 years and because we've had a long history of police involvement in the schools." Another supervisor felt that if he needed to spend a lot of time supervising the SROs, then "I've placed the wrong officers for the position."
- Other supervisors believe that supervision is not needed because, as one said, "Principals monitor them and tell me if there is a problem. For example, a principal called me to report that an SRO was constantly late for things. I spoke to the SRO and he shaped up."
- Another supervisor reported that SROs appreciate "the freedom of not having a supervisor breathing down their necks."
- Some program participants in small sites feel that informal conversations between the police chief or sheriff and the school superintendent or principal provide adequate supervision.

The Need for Close Supervision Despite Obstacles

Despite these perceptions that close supervision is not necessary, most program supervisors in the study recognize the need to monitor their SROs' behavior carefully. However, they also report that there are often serious obstacles to supervising them properly.

Be Realistic About the Obstacles to Adequate Supervision

The most common explanation for not exercising adequate supervision is **lack of time**, typically because supervisors have other important responsibilities. In many cases, the department gives these other responsibilities a higher priority than it gives the SRO program. For example, there are supervisors who also command their department's uniformed services division, detective or juvenile bureau, or community services division; who are the department's assistant public information officer or grant manager; or who continue to investigate juvenile cases as juvenile detective sergeants.

The **long distances between schools** or **large numbers of schools** in some jurisdictions hamper some supervisors:

- One supervisor in the Albuquerque, New Mexico, Police Department oversees 15 schools spread out over the entire city.
- The Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office program supervisor is responsible for 12 SROs in a county of 776 square miles.

Some supervisors, since they lack understanding of what SROs are supposed to do, are said to take a "hands-off" approach **because they would find it awkward or embarrassing to monitor them**.

Become Aware of the Multiple Purposes Supervision Serves

Despite these obstacles, finding ways of supervising SROs adequately is important to:

- assist new SROs in **making the transition** from patrol officer to school-based resource officer;
- identify signs of poor SRO performance **before** school administrators have to bring it to the supervisors' attention—school administrators should not have to report problems with SROs that program supervisors could have caught if they had been conscientiously monitoring the officers' behavior in the first place;
- make sure SROs realize that **their department considers their work to be important**;
- make SROs feel they have **support from department leadership** when prioritizing their workload, working through problems with school administrators, or handling challenging situations in the schools;
- ensure reasonable **consistency in program implementation** with programs that have officers in multiple schools or more than one program supervisor; and
- demonstrate **to school administrators** that the agency considers the program an important collaborative initiative.

Even when programs assign independent, mature officers as SROs, **supervisors cannot assume that the officers need little supervision** (see the box "Even Well Qualified, Experienced SROs Need Supervision").

Supervisors cannot rely on administrators to always report problems because some school principals and assistant principals may be too busy or may be reluctant to involve the supervisor and, as a result, allow the problem go unaddressed or let it fester until it explodes. One police chief with experience with numerous school administrators reported:

In my experience, I have found that many principals will accept mediocrity instead of saying something negative about their SRO. In fact, school administrators exist in a culture where they often "don't want to get anybody in trouble." Therefore, they will not criticize an SRO's performance to the SRO supervisor.

An example of the importance of not assuming principals will take the initiative to report dissatisfaction with their SROs occurred when a high school principal who was contacted by the SRO supervisor only at the end of the school year expressed concern that his SRO had been making better connections with the athletes than with other students and needed to reach out to the other kids. While the following year the SRO made a concerted effort to contact kids from other walks in life and fixed the problem after the supervisor talked with him, an entire school year should not have passed before the problem was corrected.

As a result, some supervisors make it a point to ferret out problems early.

- Tim Carney, when he became the captain in charge of the Sarasota County SRO program in Florida, required supervisors to be more visible on campus where they could supervise SROs and meet frequently with principals to identify problems with officers early rather than getting "blindsided" by the news of problems at the end of each year during the principals' annual evaluation of the SROs.
- The sergeant in charge of the Lakewood, Colorado, SRO program decided the best way to ensure she was aware of any problems between officers and school administrators was to host a roundtable discussion each semester with all SROs and school administrators so she could look for both verbal and non-verbal clues to any problems.
- The sergeant in charge of the Fontana, California, program conducts performance reviews with each SRO every three months so he can identify and address problems more quickly than if the review occurred only at the end of the school year.

A largely "hands-off" approach to supervision also results in school administrators alone directing the activities of the SROs assigned to their schools. ***The law enforcement agency needs to ensure that the SROs are addressing its goals, as well.***

Even Well Qualified, Experienced SROs Need Supervision

While some program supervisors believe that *their* SROs require little or no supervision, a number of programs have found to their embarrassment that this is not true.

- Because SROs deal constantly with parents and engage in after-school activities with kids, they frequently make decisions that must withstand public scrutiny. As a result, supervisors need to make sure the officers are not exposing the department to any possible negative public relations.
- According to one supervisor, "You need to monitor people, because all young people do their own thing—especially when they're given a lot of autonomy."
- Another program supervisor noted that not all law enforcement officers want to work as hard as the SRO position requires.
 - A school principal reported that, "One SRO was a bit lazy—he was not visible enough, spending too much time in his office. So I talked with the SRO first and then brought in the supervisor—who was unaware of the problem—to reinforce my concern. The SRO corrected the problem."
 - A police chief decided the department needed to play a more active role in supervising the position after it was discovered that an SRO was taking advantage of the lack of supervision to shirk his responsibilities.
- Even the most conscientious SROs (or teachers or tug boat captains or assembly line workers) may become lax over time if left unsupervised. Illustrating this, one program supervisor has begun periodic "field inspections" to check on the SROs' appearance and equipment because he had found that "they were starting to look a little sloppy wearing jeans and sneakers" (although the SROs were not required to wear uniforms).
- In a county in which supervisors trusted the SROs to be in their schools (and assumed administrators would call them if they were not), one SRO was regularly leaving school for a tryst. The discovery created very bad publicity for the department.
- As discussed in chapter 4, "Minimizing Turnover Among SROs," some highly effective SROs get burned out or become dissatisfied with the position but keep their unhappiness to themselves. Programs need to do their best not to lose these SROs by keeping in regular touch and staying alert to any signs of frustration with the assignment that can be addressed before it is too late.

Finally, as Sergeant Lowell Rademacher, the (now retired) program supervisor in Marshall, Minnesota, pointed out, "The level of supervision depends on the nature of the individual SRO—some need a lot, some little." But all require at least a basic level—and sometimes more than they and their supervisors think.

Approaches to Effective Supervision

While it is important to establish formal procedures for supervising SROs, departments must first be clear about what activities they expect their SROs to undertake.

Identify the SRO Responsibilities That Supervisors Need to Monitor

Several supervisors and SROs report that, without formal documentation of the officers' specific roles and responsibilities, supervisors will have a difficult time monitoring them because the SROs are likely to be unclear about what is expected of them and supervisors will be uncertain about what they should be looking for. To help prevent this problem, the contract between the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office and School District includes a five-page description of the SROs' responsibilities at each grade level that supervisors use to monitor and assess the officers' performance. The box "Detailed, Written SRO Responsibilities" provides examples of how two other programs have facilitated supervision by preparing detailed written descriptions of the SROs' responsibilities that supervisors use as guidelines for making sure the officers are doing what they are supposed to be doing-and not doing what they should not be doing.

Detailed, Written SRO Responsibilities Make Effective Supervision Possible

The Jefferson City, Missouri, program's memorandum of agreement with the school district stipulates that the SROs:

- Will be in the hallways during all class changes and lunch periods.
- Will not act as a school disciplinarian.
- Will not conduct locker checks without probable cause.
- Will not leave the school facility without prior notification of the School Administrator and/or the School Resource Officer Supervisor.
- Will not transport a sick or injured child for medical assistance.

The Schaumburg, Illinois, program's School Resource Officer Operations Manual includes a detailed list of SRO responsibilities, such as:

- Teach lessons in gang/violence resistance and gang/alcohol resistance to all students.
- Interact with students as a positive role model during lunch and study hall periods.
- Establish a working relationship with behaviorally at risk students.
- Work with parents on runaway problems.

Implement Multiple Supervision Approaches

There is a variety of approaches SRO programs can use to supervise SROs:

- require and review SRO activity logs;
- review case or arrest reports;
- host regular meetings with SROs as a group;
- visit the school campus;
- maintain telephone or radio communication;
- survey students;
- survey teachers; and
- formally evaluate SRO performance.

Several supervisors and SROs report that ***the most effective supervision occurs when programs use two or more approaches to monitoring the officers' performance***. The programs in Sarasota County and Palm Beach County, Florida, and Maury County, Tennessee, described in the case studies at the end of this chapter, all use multiple approaches to supervising their SROs, including several of the following methods.

Require and Review SRO Logs

The most common method programs use to supervise SROs is to require weekly or monthly activity logs. Most programs require the SROs to include not only activity counts but also narrative detail—because, as the program supervisor in Boone, North Carolina, reported, "Having narrative helps me identify subtle issues in the schools that might not be obvious if I just received activity counts." One sheriff's office requires SROs to get teachers' signatures on the officers' logs to verify that the officers have actually taught the classes listed in their logs. The box "Sample Activities Tracked in SRO Logs" summarizes the types of activities most departments require SROs to track.

Sample Activities Tracked in SRO Logs	
The following are some of the most common activities program supervisors require their SROs to track.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• complaints• completed reports• arrests• weapons confiscated• investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• referrals to other agencies• meetings• classroom lectures/presentations• after-school events• parent and child counseling sessions

The Lenoir County Sheriff's Office in North Carolina and the Delaware State Police use an incident tracking software program called *School COP* developed with funding from the National Institute of Justice. Distributed at COPS in School trainings funded by the COPS Office. The software with instructions and a sample database are available for free at www.schoolcopsoftware.com. Chapter 8, "Maintaining Program Funding," provides additional information about the software in the section on "Documentation of Program Activity."

While just having to fill out the logs may serve to keep some SROs on their toes, supervisors need to review the logs conscientiously to follow up on any apparent problems they reveal (see the box "Following Up on Concerns Raised by SRO Logs").

In many cases, supervisors distribute the SROs' reports to school administrators and, in some cases, city or county commissioners, who may use the information to conduct their own program oversight.

- In Illinois, the Schaumburg School District assistant superintendent of schools reports he reads the SROs' monthly reports not only to monitor the officers' activities but also "because board members may call me on an incident at a school and ask for more information about it. For example, when drugs were detected at a junior high school, there was a rumor that they were being distributed at a soccer field. I knew this wasn't true—just one kid was involved and he was arrested—because of what I read in the SRO's monthly report."
- The Marshall Police Department program supervisor submits the SROs' monthly reports to the chief who forwards them to the city council.
- A representative from the Maury County School District in Tennessee reviews SROs' weekly logs to track their activities and the types of problems officers are addressing. He also uses the information to keep the county commissioners informed about the program's activities.

Review Case or Arrest Reports

In most programs, supervisors review SROs' case records and arrest reports for accuracy, completeness, readability, and the need for follow up. Of course, all police agencies require supervisors to review officers' arrest reports, but they do it with varying degrees of thoroughness and follow up. Because arrests of students can result in parental confrontations and telephone calls to local officials, supervisors need to be especially conscientious about reviewing their SROs' reports.

Following Up on Concerns Raised in SRO Logs

Diligent supervisors follow up on "red flags" or missing information in SROs' logs.

- When a Sarasota County program supervisor informed the unit commander he had noticed that an SRO had not reported having taught any classes during the previous six weeks, the commander told the supervisor to tell the SRO to get into the classroom more.
- When a supervisor in Maury County saw from an SRO's logs that the officer was not teaching many classes but had high arrest numbers, he explained to the SRO that he was being too reactive and needed to do things like increase the number of violence prevention classes rather than make so many arrests.
- The Boone Police Department supervisor could tell from an SRO's logs that the officer was being too counselor-oriented and trying to solve student problems on his own instead of referring students to appropriate local resources for help.

Meet Regularly With SROs as a Group

Many supervisors hold regular meetings with SROs in order to:

- provide supervisors an opportunity to share department and programmatic information;
- provide SROs an opportunity to meet with peers to discuss common issues and trends;
- assure that the SROs are visiting the department on a regular basis; and
- generate a "team" feeling and esprit de corps among the SROs.

These meetings also afford an opportunity for supervisors to "read between the lines" of what SROs say to identify problems the officers may be having.

In addition, simply by gathering the SROs together and encouraging them to "vent," supervisors may learn of issues that the officers themselves will not volunteer to discuss.

In a few programs, school administrators participate in the meetings, which, many supervisors report, provides not only a greater opportunity to have problems with the SROs or the program raised but also a chance to solve them on the spot. The meetings also give supervisors the opportunity to address any confusion school staff may have related to appropriate SRO activities and department procedure.

- The Lakewood Police Department's roundtable meetings held once or twice a semester to discuss problems and trends in the schools include not only the program supervisor and the SROs but also school administrators. Sergeant Patricia Heffner, the program supervisor, reports that "the roundtables give me an opportunity to identify issues I might have missed during individual discussions with SROs and school administrators."
- In another site, an advisory committee consisting of parents, a teacher, a community group member, and a school board member, as well as the SROs, the chief deputy, and school administrators, meets monthly to share information about the program's operation.

Visit Schools

Supervisors in many programs visit their SROs' schools to talk with the officers, school administrators, or both, and to observe how the SROs interact with students. Most supervisors are limited to visiting only once a year because of their other responsibilities or because of the large number of participating schools or long distances between them. Nevertheless, some supervisors manage to visit more often.

- Sergeant Rochelle Thompson, the program supervisor with the Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office, visits one to three different schools each week.
- Captain Tim Carney in Sarasota County expects each supervisor to visit unannounced each high school and middle school to which his SROs are assigned at least once a week and each elementary school at least every other week.
- Lieutenant Chris Hagwood, supervisor of the Garner, North Carolina, Police Department program, tries to observe the three SROs at their schools once a month, including observing them teach.
- The Boone Police Department supervisor drives by the high school most mornings so the principal knows he is accessible and available to discuss any issues or suggested improvements.

Visiting schools not only provides an opportunity to monitor the SROs' activities, it also ***demonstrates to school administrators how important the police or sheriff's department considers the program to be.***

Some supervisors in smaller departments do not place much emphasis on visits because they say they are confident that, because of their close relationships with

school administrators, principals and assistant principals will contact them quickly if there is a problem with the SROs. However, as explained above, this confidence can be misplaced (see the box above, "Even Well Qualified, Experienced SROs Need Supervision").

In some cases, ***supervisors plan their visits to observe SROs give presentations, teach classes, or supervise extracurricular events.***

- Supervisors in the Chula Vista, California, program observe the elementary school level SROs teach at least once a year, showing up at random and sitting in the back of the class. Sergeant William (Joe) Cline, one of the supervisors, believes "This is just sound supervision. As a supervisor, [by observing the SROs teach] you can better assess the skills and abilities of your staff for their yearly evaluations and for continuous feedback, praise, and, when necessary, development."
- In addition to observing SROs teach, Tucson, Arizona, Police Department supervisors go to selected after-school or weekend events that SROs run or play a prominent role in.

Of course, most supervisors visit the schools immediately whenever there is a major problem that requires a ranking officer's attention.

Maintain Telephone or Radio Communication

Program supervisors in one program rely heavily on telephoning SROs to keep tabs on what they are doing and anticipate any problems. Many other departments issue cell phones or pagers to their SROs to help maintain contact between officers and program supervisors.

Dispatchers Track SRO Activities in One Program

In a small site in Kentucky, the SRO calls in his activities to the law enforcement dispatch center. When a new activity starts, he radios in and the dispatcher records the precise time and activity category (e.g., "going on patrol now;" "responding to call to investigate possible drug use;" "going to teach driver ed now"). Of course, patrol officers and road deputies in all agencies radio their dispatchers when they initiate an activity and have "cleared" a scene. However, the dispatch system in this community calculates time spent on each activity and can aggregate time spent on various activities on a weekly or any other basis.

Survey Students

The supervisor of the Jefferson City, Missouri, program conducts surveys of randomly selected 7th, 9th, and 12th grade students on perceptions of safety and opinions of the SRO, asking such questions as, "Does the SRO help you feel better about the police?" "Does your SRO attend extracurricular events?" "Are you able to talk easily with your SRO?" When the data showed that several students did not know who or where one SRO was, the supervisor instructed the officer to be in front of the school when the buses arrived and to walk through the cafeteria at lunch.

Survey Teachers

The Lenoir County Sheriff's Office administers a formal survey twice a year to teachers asking about the faculty's:

- perceptions of their own safety and safety of the school;
- knowledge and interactions with their school's SRO; and
- opinions of the officers' performance in such areas as visibility, rapport with students, communication skills, and impact on the school environment.

The program supervisor uses the information to improve the program. For example, when several teachers reported that the SROs were not in the school enough, the supervisor tried to reduce the number of times the officers were pulled from the schools to attend court.

Formally Evaluate SRO Performance

Several programs report that developing a strong performance evaluation system for SROs is important to:

- be able to identify areas in which SROs need to improve;
- learn how to increase the effectiveness of the program as a whole;
- hold the department accountable for the program's performance;
- provide a method of securing school administrators' comments on the program and on individual SROs' strengths and weaknesses; and
- secure information that can be used to market and sustain the program.

In many cases, departments evaluate SROs using the same criteria they use for assessing patrol officer performance. However, several supervisors in the study reported that the information they obtain from this type of assessment makes it difficult to identify how the SROs' performance might be improved, while some SROs report that the questions are unsatisfying to them because the assessment fails to consider the unique activities they perform in the schools. As a result, many

departments included in the study use one of two approaches to monitoring the specific behavior SROs engage in:

- ***Include additional performance measures in the standard performance evaluation that make it more applicable to SROs.*** For example, the Garner Police Department uses a performance appraisal software to score patrol officers in five areas but includes two additional areas for SROs—teaching and counseling. For each of the two SRO-specific areas, the software identifies a number of specific focuses to help assess each officer's strength and weaknesses. For example, teaching includes:
 - a) Comes to presentations well prepared.
 - b) Organizes information in a logical and pedagogic manner.
 - c) Meets the needs of the audience (faculties or students).
 - d) Stimulates public interest and attention.
 - e) Motivates learners to take action when needed.
 - f) Leaves room for questions and discussions.

By retaining the measures for patrol officers but including measures tailored to the SROs' work, departments and SROs are able to maintain some consistency in their performance reviews as the officers make the transition from street work to school work and back.

- ***Develop and use only performance measures that are specific to the SRO position,*** such as classroom teaching, relating to students, and working well with school administrators. According to Jim Aquilo, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent in Plain Local School District in Stark County, Ohio, school administrators developed their own SRO assessment measures to make sure the measures addressed the school district's needs in having an SRO in the schools (see appendix A). The Sarasota County program has also developed performance measures tailored to the unique work SROs perform (see the case study at the end of the chapter). Furthermore, the program's evaluation procedure provides for the supervisor and SRO to develop a written plan and a mutually agreed-upon 30-, 60-, or 90-day deadline by which the officer will remedy any problems. Five law enforcement agencies, with assistance from the COPS Office, have developed specific outcome goals for SROs and identified ways of measuring how well the officers have achieved each goal (see the box "SRO Performance Measures That Five Law Enforcement Agencies Developed").

Involve School Administrators in Assessing SRO Performance

Many programs have found it extremely helpful to involve school administrators in helping to assess their SROs' performance.

Why Involve School Administrators

Programs offer a number of compelling reasons for bringing principals and assistant principals into the assessment process.

- Principals and assistant principals can usually assess SROs' performance in ways that program supervisors cannot because ***school administrators have vastly more contact with SROs***. In effect, because of their daily contact with the SROs, they are the police agency's on-site "eyes and ears."
- Principals and assistant principals have a much better grasp than the law enforcement agency can ever have of ***the problems in their schools that the SROs can help address***. For example, one school district asked its SRO to expand the topics included in his elementary school lesson plans after teachers and students requested that the officer cover other important issues besides gangs.
- Insofar as SRO programs represent collaboration between law enforcement and the schools, it is only logical that ***there should be collaboration in terms of supervision***. In addition, including school administrators in the supervision of SROs conveys the message that they are valuable partners in the joint initiative.
- Supervisors who do not have the authority to replace SROs, or are uncertain about whether they will be supported if they ask their superiors for permission to remove an SRO, can ***use administrator evaluations to buttress their case***. A principal turned in a written evaluation to the supervisor in one program documenting that the SRO was performing poorly and liked being an SRO only because of the weekday, daytime hours. The supervisor already knew about the problem but had been unable to remove the officer until he had the school administrator's negative evaluation.

Indeed, most good SROs *want* their school administrators to provide supervisors with their opinions of the officers' performance. Because school administrators in one school district do not evaluate their SROs, one SRO went out of his way to ask his assistant principal at the end of the school year to provide a written evaluation of him. "When my yearly evaluation [by the sheriff's office] comes up, I want a record of what I have done and how well I did it, and how the administrator feels about my work."

SRO Performance Measures That Five Law Enforcement Agencies Developed*

With funding from the COPS Office, Circle Solutions, Inc, a professional services firm in the Washington, D.C., area, piloted an outcome-oriented SRO performance evaluation process with five law enforcement agencies in six schools. For each SRO for the coming year, a group of SROs, their supervisors, and program "consumers"—students, faculty, staff, and parents—identified three to six goals specific to the crime and disorder problems in the officer's school. ***The consumer group designed measures to determine whether the SRO achieved the goals and helped collect the data.*** Throughout the school year, SROs implemented activities designed to achieve the goals and tracked their activities. At the end of the year, the consumer group reconvened to assess how well the SROs had achieved their goals. The purpose of these efforts was ***to integrate the findings into the SROs' performance evaluation*** and to use the findings to adjust the activities the SROs would implement during the following school year.

The matrix below identifies some of the goals and measures the group developed. The full project report, as well as a guide for replicating the SRO performance evaluation process, is available from www.copsinschools.org.

Outcome Goals	Measures of Achievement
Reduce fights or bullying on campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incident reports for fights • Discipline referrals for fighting or attempting to fight • Suspensions for assaults, fighting, or threats • Police crime reports on assaults and battery
Reduce gang activity on school grounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student survey on threats, victimization, and knowledge of anti-bullying strategies • Student survey on the prevalence of gang behaviors • Parent survey regarding their knowledge of gang signs and behavior • School staff survey regarding knowledge of gang signs and behaviors, and prevalence of gang behaviors
Improve trust and relationships between SRO and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student survey regarding familiarity with SROs and comfort level approaching them
Reduce the incidence of drug violations by students in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incident reports of use or sales • Arrest reports • Student referrals for alcohol or drug use
Reduce neighborhood offenses (e.g., criminal mischief, robbery) by students during school hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls for service • Crime reports

* Information provided by Circle Solutions, Inc., McLean, Virginia: (703) 821-8955.

Areas of SRO Performance That Programs Can Ask School Administrators to Review

Typically, programs provide school administrators with a specific set of questions to answer in assessing SRO performance. Appendixes B and C present the assessment forms that the Olympia, Washington, and Pine Bluffs, Arkansas, police departments distribute to school administrators. The box "Sample Performance Areas and Measures That School Administrators Can Use to Assess SRO Performance" lists some of the areas of SRO performance that programs frequently ask school administrators to assess and some of the ways administrators can evaluate the officers' performance in each area of performance.

Sample Performance Areas and Measures That School Administrators Can Use to Assess SRO Performance	
Performance Areas	Sample Assessment Criteria
Professionalism	<input type="checkbox"/> Demeanor <input type="checkbox"/> Appearance <input type="checkbox"/> Punctuality <input type="checkbox"/> Discretion
Communication Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Speaking ability <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to verbalize effectively <input type="checkbox"/> Listening skills
Knowledge of Job and Duties	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge of laws and arrest powers <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge of reporting responsibilities
Job Performance	<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom management skills <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching skills <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in extracurricular activities <input type="checkbox"/> Productivity <input type="checkbox"/> Handling noncriminal incidents <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict resolution
Community Relations	<input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility to students <input type="checkbox"/> Relationship with parents <input type="checkbox"/> Relationship with teachers
Crisis Intervention	<input type="checkbox"/> Crises and safety planning <input type="checkbox"/> Handling criminal incidents <input type="checkbox"/> Impact on the school environment

Rating Schemes

After the program has identified the information it will solicit from school administrators, it needs to consider **how performance will be measured**. The box "Examples of Methods School Administrators Use to Rate SRO Performance" suggests a variety of different rating schemes. Most departments ask administrators to rate officer performance in specific areas using a 3-, 4-, or 5-point scale, which provides degrees of agreement or disagreement with each performance measure.

Most programs ask school administrators to answer a few open-ended questions regarding the SROs' strengths and weaknesses, suggest areas for improvement, or explain the choice of a low rating. Supervisors can use such supporting information during performance reviews to reinforce their recommendations to the SROs for why and how they need to improve.

Examples of Methods School Administrators Use to Rate SRO Performance	
Performance Area	Rating Scheme
Organizational skills (e.g., scheduling, flow of material, dependability)	Scale of 1 to 5 (5 highest, 1 lowest)
Desire to have this particular SRO Officer return to your school next year (as a guideline, a rating of "3" indicates that you would be content with any SRO Officer, including this one; a "5" means you absolutely want him/her to return, specifically; a "1" would indicate that another officer should be assigned to your school)	Scale of 1 to 5 (5 highest, 1 lowest)
Provides security in and around building, particularly at student arrival and departure times	1= meets standard of school district; 2 = sometimes meets the standard; 3 = needs improvement
Assists in mediating disputes in a non-violent manner	1= meets standard of school district; 2 = sometimes meets the standard; 3 = needs improvement
Judgment-ability to accurately assess situations and act accordingly	4-point scale (poor, fair, good, excellent)
Professionalism-presents a good image with appearance and actions	4-point scale (poor, fair, good, excellent)
Effectiveness as a teacher a. Control of classroom c. Preparation b. Content of classes d. Interest in students	5-point scale (strongly agree, agree, don't know, disagree, strongly disagree)
Officer's presence contributes to an increased perception of safety	5-point scale (strongly agree, agree, don't know, disagree, strongly disagree)

Approaches to Involving Schools in Evaluating the SROs and the SRO Program

The program coordinator should collaborate with appropriate school administrators in determining what would, on the one hand, ***provide the least burdensome way principals and assistant principals can provide their assessments*** yet, on the other hand, ***furnish the program with the most useful information about its SROs***. In some programs, school administrators have developed their own forms.

- The Stark County Sheriff's Office encourages administrators from each of its five partner school districts to review the performance of its SROs at least annually. Two of the school districts developed specific reporting forms for this purpose. Jim Aquillo, Plain Local School District Assistant Administrator to the Superintendent in charge of security, together with a school superintendent in a near-by school district, developed an evaluation form. They based the form on examples the SROs had brought back from National Association of School Resource Officer (NASRO) conferences but revised them to reflect their two SROs' unique job descriptions. They made sure that the evaluation measures were related to what the SROs were in fact supposed to be doing (see appendix A). Twice a year, Aquillo sends the form to all 11 principals in his school district, summarizes the results he gets back, and submits them to the Stark County Sheriff's Office SRO program supervisor.

A few programs add interesting innovations to their approaches to involving school administrators in the assessment process.

- In addition to formally requesting annual evaluations from teachers and administrators, when Sergeant Rochelle Thompson, the program supervisor in Oklahoma County, visits different schools each week, she takes six copies of an evaluation form to hand out randomly to teachers, coaches, and administrators she happens to run into in the corridors to verify that the SROs are making themselves visible in the schools.
- The Tucson Police Department's annual review of each SRO includes written comments from the municipal court's prosecuting attorneys—for example, assessing the officer's ability to testify effectively and the thoroughness and accuracy of his or her written reports and investigative skills. Program supervisors telephone the attorneys for their verbal evaluations.
- The captain in charge of the Sarasota County program makes the program's three first-line supervisors responsible for getting written evaluations returned by at least three administrators for each SRO—for example, a principal, assistant principal, and teacher.

In addition to addressing in-person with school administrators and SROs any problems or issues their evaluations raise, supervisors should review the assessments to note and address any areas where administrators' expectations of the SROs' performance may be inconsistent with the supervisors' understanding of the officers' job duties.

Supervisors

Supervisors need to devote adequate time and care to monitoring the SROs' activities to be able to reliably assess the officers' performance. Programs also stress that it is essential either to select supervisors who are already qualified to supervise SROs or else train them in how to supervise SROs.

Establish a Realistic Ratio of Supervisors to SROs

There is no established standard for an effective ratio of supervisors to SROs. Most of the programs in the study have only one supervisor, even when the program has several SROs. For example the Oklahoma County program supervisor monitors 12 SROs, while the King County, Washington, supervisor is responsible for 10 full-time SROs and 25 part-time SROs. Some supervisors may not be able to monitor such a large number of SROs properly. As a result, when the Pinellas County, Florida, School District Police Department saw the need for increased supervision of its SROs, it negotiated with the school district to give up one-and-one-half of its SROs in return for funding an additional supervisor.

A number of other programs have more than one supervisor, typically two or more sergeants working under a higher ranking officer who frequently has other responsibilities in addition to running the SRO program (see the box "Sample Ratios of Supervisors to SROs").

Select Supervisors Carefully for the Position

Most departments have no formal procedures for selecting supervisors for the SRO program beyond what is required by the labor-management agreement or agency policies and procedures. As one supervisor said, "There is no rhyme or reason in the selection process" in his agency. In small police departments and sheriff's agencies, chiefs or sheriffs typically identify one of their few ranking officers to supervise the SRO—or supervise the SRO themselves. In many larger agencies, the supervisor assumes the responsibility by virtue of having been promoted to supervisor of the unit in which the SRO program is housed—for example, the juvenile bureau or community relations division.

Sample Ratios of Supervisors to SROs

- *Virginia Beach*: An administrative captain and 4 sergeants supervise 30 SROs.
- *Albuquerque*: 2 sergeants supervise the 20-person SRO/G.R.E.A.T. unit, each responsible for 15 schools (10 middle schools, 5 high schools).
- *Chula Vista*: 2 sergeants and 2 field agents supervise the program's 18 SROs. Each sergeant handles officers at 49 different schools.
- *Tucson*: Each of 3 sergeants supervises 8 SROs.
- *Palm Beach County*: Each of 13 lieutenants (the department has no sergeants) supervises about 10 SROs.
- *Sarasota County*: 3 sergeants and 1 captain supervise 27 SROs (see the case study at the end of the chapter).

However, departments that have developed formal, detailed procedures for screening candidates for SRO supervisor positions report the ***process results in the selection of qualified individuals who can best ensure that the program is properly monitored.***

- *Tucson*: The Human Resources Division opens up the application process at the request of Rick Hovden, a lieutenant in the bureau in which the SRO program is housed. Interested sergeants send memorandums of interest to the Human Resources Division, which forwards them to Hovden. The lieutenant rates applicants based on what is written in the memo, the person's qualifications, a review of personnel files, and other considerations. He then interviews each applicant or, if there are several applicants and he so chooses, he convenes an interview panel.
- *Chula Vista*: The supervisor is a four-year assignment. After the position has been announced, applicants go before an oral board, which chooses the person.
- *Palm Beach*: Candidates must pass a written test, role play scenarios in front of an interview panel of supervisors from other law enforcement agencies, be interviewed by a panel of department captains, and be appointed, after an interview, by the chief (see the case study at the end of the chapter).

A few programs require applicants to have been SROs. Of course, this is not feasible when a program is just beginning or the current SROs do not want or are not suitable for the position. However, when it is an option, the experience can be invaluable for effective program monitoring. An SRO in one police department complained that his program supervisors are "not familiar with the program and may not understand why an SRO handled a situation in a particular way, because there are differences in how the same problem may be handled in the school versus on the street." Sergeant Richard Davies, a former SRO in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, reported that his supervisor once wrote him up because, after a few years, the SRO's arrests were down. "The upper echelon, using a departmentwide evaluation measure that rates officers on number of arrests, did not understand that I had finally brought the school under control to where I did not need to make so many arrests." The higher-ups told Davies' immediate supervisor (who **did** understand that the measure did not apply to SROs) to "counsel" Davies. Reflecting these problems, the Maury County Sheriff's Department eventually added experience as an SRO as a selection criterion because, according to Captain Nathan Johns, "Supervisors need to be able to relate to the issues brought up at the weekly meetings because they had once been in those shoes."

Train Supervisors

Few of the programs in the study train program supervisors in how to monitor SROs. (The 2002 NASRO School Resource Officer Survey—contact Resourcer@aol.com or call 888-31-NASRO—also found that "school-based law enforcement supervisors are not specially trained in the supervision of school-based officers.") Some supervisors, however, have had related experience or training that improves their suitability to monitor the SROs' performance. For example, Sergeant Jerry Thommes, the current police department SRO supervisor in Schaumburg, was the school liaison officer at the local high school where, unlike most liaisons, he taught 20 class periods a semester. He had also attended a 40-hour NASRO training, becoming certified as an SRO.

Even when supervisors have been SROs themselves, **training can give them guidance in effective methods of assessing SRO performance and providing constructive criticism.** After all, patrol officers or road deputies who are promoted to sergeant—even though they have been on patrol for years—go to sergeant's training school before they are thrown out on the streets supervising a group of officers or deputies. Reflecting this perspective, new supervisors in Palm Beach County do ride-alongs with experienced supervisors before taking on the new position (see the case study below).

As Sergeant Jerry Thommes did, supervisors with no personal experience as SROs can attend one of the basic SRO courses offered by several organizations (see chapter 5, "Training SROs") to learn what SROs should be doing—and not doing—for purposes of assessing their performance. At least two organizations also offer specialized training for SRO supervisors:

- NASRO offers a 24-hour SRO Management Symposium designed to provide managers with "information, skills and strategies to develop, coordinate, and maintain a successful SRO program in their school community"—see www.nasro.org/course_management.asp.
- Corbin & Associates, Inc., offers a 24-hour Supervision and Management of School-Based Law Enforcement Programs that covers the SRO position "from the selection interview, through performance reviews, to the removal of problem officers"—see www.srotraining.com/description.html. The sergeant who supervises the Lakewood SRO program attended this course.

* * * * *

The case studies that follow illustrate how three programs have gone about providing timely and thorough training for their SROs.

- In addition to requiring SROs to complete activity logs, the program operated by the Sarasota County, Florida, Sheriff's Office formally evaluates SROs twice a year with mandatory school administrator participation. The agency's StarTrac meetings, a departmentwide accountability tool patterned after New York City's Compstat sessions, provide an opportunity for the program to explain its activities and successes and a chance for the sheriff and majors to ask pointed questions about what the program is doing and how it can improve—and publicly commend high quality performance.
- The Maury County, Tennessee, Sheriff's Department requires SROs to complete an activity log every other week that provides 29 pieces of information. Program supervisors compare the information in the logs over time and across schools, and submit the reports to the county board of education and the county commission. The department holds a mandatory weekly meeting for all SROs and SRO supervisors which the sheriff often attends that enables SROs and supervisors to identify and resolve any problems. All candidates for supervisor must have experience as SROs.

- The Palm Beach County School District Police Department's process for selecting and training front-line supervisors is especially thorough. Candidates must be recommended by their supervisors; pass a written test on State and county law and the department's own general orders; role play scenarios in front of an interview panel of supervisors from other law enforcement agencies; and be interviewed and scored by a panel of department captains. Applicants who pass are sent to a police academy for 40 hours of management training and, when a supervisory position opens up, spend four days doing ride-alongs with experienced supervisors.

Case Study: Sarasota County, Florida, Sheriff's Department (500 sworn)

Three sergeants devote full-time to supervising 27 SROs. A captain who commands the Youth Services Bureau, Tim Carney, spends full-time overseeing the entire program. Carney was an SRO himself for eight years.

Openings for supervisor are posted agencywide, and Carney either selects someone on his own or convenes a panel of officers, including existing SRO supervisors, to interview the candidates. Having been an SRO weighs heavily in favor of the applicant—as a result, most supervisors have been SROs.

As described below, the program relies on several methods of supervising SROs:

- SRO activity logs;
- StarTrac meetings;
- visits to schools to talk with administrators and observe SROs teach;
- formal twice-yearly evaluations of SRO performance; and
- formal participation by school administrators.

SRO Activity Logs

Supervisors make use of SRO logs to help monitor the officers' activities.

- An SRO's log indicated that he had not taught any classes during the previous six weeks. While the supervisor told the captain that the SRO was doing a lot of coaching "and the kids love him," and the other SRO at the school was doing considerable teaching, Captain Tim Carney still told the supervisor to tell the SRO to get into the classroom more.
- After a lewd and indecent incident at a school, the SRO documented in his log that he had submitted a school report. According to the SRO, "When Captain Carney read my log, he wanted to know why I hadn't submitted a police report. I told him that the victim's parents wanted the problem handled administratively, and I had documented that."

- Another SRO said, "We have to teach certain classes for certain grade levels, and the log now shows the status of all the classes—how far we are along in teaching each course for each grade level. That way, supervisors can warn you, for example, that the school year is coming to an end and you haven't started or completed a particular course you're responsible for teaching every year. My supervisor once pointed out to me that I hadn't completed one of my teaching assignments. I explained that the 3rd and 4th grade teachers were tied up every class teaching for the FCAT [Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test] given in March, so they would not let me in their classrooms until after the test. But this shows that the supervisors are tracking the SROs' progress through our reports."

SROs submit their logs to the program secretary a few days before each StarTrac meeting (see below); supervisors screen them for errors or unusual entries and then review the statistics together before presenting them at StarTrac.

StarTrac Meetings

The sheriff's office has adopted a variation on the New York City Compstat system, called StarTrac, involving a meeting every six weeks of top command staff (sheriff, majors) to review each bureau's activities (e.g., special operations, day shift operations) during the preceding month-and-a-half and to follow up on issues raised at the previous meeting. A number of other ranking officers attend as observers. Bureau commanders give PowerPoint presentations describing their units' activities. The sheriff and majors ask questions, criticize failures and discuss remedies, and praise good performance.

The Youth Services Bureau—consisting entirely of the SRO program—presents an update on the SRO program at each meeting. The box "A StarTrac Meeting Discussion About the SRO Program" illustrates how the procedure helps to hold SROs—and their supervisors—accountable for their activities and time. "There is so much more accountability with StarTrac," one SRO said. "You need to be able to account for your numbers [on your logs]."

Visits to Schools

The previous commander had wanted the supervisors to remain in the office to be available in case an emergency occurred that they would need to address on short notice. The new captain, Tim Carney, ***wanted supervisors to be more visible on campus where they could supervise the SROs and meet frequently with principals to identify problems with the SROs early*** rather than getting "blindsided" by the news of problems at the end of each year during the principals' annual evaluation of the SROs. In addition, with the advent of cell phones, the supervisors, even if they were at a school could be contacted and respond immediately in the event of a crisis.

A StarTrac Meeting Discussion About the SRO Program

Captain Tim Carney, commander of the Youth Services Bureau, presents a 30-minute report and then answers questions about the SRO program, including reading letters of commendation for three SROs. Carney displays charts of crime statistics for the schools countywide and then for each school in the district. Each chart (see the examples in appendixes D and E) shows:

- statistics for the current reporting period (i.e., previous six weeks), the previous reporting period, and the differences between the two; and
- current and previous year-to-date statistics, and the differences between the two.

Another matrix identifies the specific meetings the SROs have attended (e.g., Kiwanis, Boy Scouts), the dates, and the names of the SROs who attended.

A major asks a series of questions:

- "What were the circumstances surrounding the bomb threat?"
- "It looks like three of your SROs were stuck with the really tough assignment of chaperoning Grad Night. How did that go?"
- "Why has [the crime of] battery gone down so much in the schools compared with the previous reporting period?"
Carney: "Kids get squirrely this time of year and get suspended, plus the bullying curriculum."
- "Why have disturbances gone down?"
Carney: "Spring break reduces the number because school is not in session."
- Sheriff: "Do kids calm down because they're afraid of not graduating?"
Carney: "Yes."
- Major: "Look into why disturbances are down to make sure there aren't problems that aren't going unrecorded."
Carney: "We will check into that."

The sheriff congratulates an SRO who recovered a valuable piccolo that had been stolen. After a description of how the SROs handled a bomb scare, a major says, "Good job."

Sergeant Tim Enos, one of the three supervising sergeants, then gives a presentation on prom/graduation alcohol prevention activities. The sheriff says, "very good—you're doing a good job. It's a whole community effort. Excellent."

Carney's goal is for each supervisor to visit—unannounced—each high school and middle school to which his SROs are assigned at least once a week and each elementary school at least every other week. This can be difficult at times because the schools are so spread out. However, one school principal reported that "Carney has the supervisors come out [to the schools] a lot to talk with the principals and assistant principals. The principals are often in the rotunda area at the beginning of the day, and the supervisors can easily ask how things are going."

Carney requires that supervisors observe their SROs teach at least once each year to be able to evaluate them in this area on the annual assessment form. While observing a new SRO teach, Sergeant Tim Enos noticed that the deputy allowed a student to crack jokes to other nearby students during the class until the SRO eventually told him to be quiet or leave the class. After the class, Enos suggested that the SRO walk around the class and "spend time near the class 'clown'—don't stand next to the good kids."

Formal Evaluations of SRO Performance

Supervisors complete semi-annual and annual reviews of each SRO. For both reviews, supervisors give a performance management rating of "exceeds standard," "meets standard," or "fails."

Following the department's procedure in its General Orders for all personnel, if an SRO gets a less than satisfactory rating on an item, the supervisor can give the officer 30, 60, or 90 days to bring the work up to a satisfactory level.

- A supervisor gave an SRO who got an unsatisfactory rating on "coming to work on time" 30 days to come on time every day. The supervisor then went to the school periodically over the next two months and checked with the school principal to make sure the SRO arrived on time. If the SRO had failed to improve his performance, he would have received additional counseling from the supervisor, then a written reprimand, then termination from the program.
- A patrol officer once wrote a reprimand on an SRO he saw swear at a student and "get in his face." The SRO supervisor gave the officer 60 days in which to have no complaints filed against him for profanity; counseled him on the need to behave in a professional manner; and explained why swearing was not acceptable. Because the SRO admitted to having "lost it" and sworn at the student, and apologized for his behavior, the supervisor recommended to Captain Tim Carney that the officer not lose a day's pay, and the captain agreed.

Involving the Schools in Evaluating the SROs

At the end of each school year, supervisors give school administrators an SRO Evaluation Form on which to record their assessments of their SROs. The form provides the opportunity to rate the officers as poor, fair, good, and excellent in 20 different areas, such as "Availability" and "Amount of Classroom Participation" (see the box "School Administrator Criteria for Rating SRO Performance"). The form also provides space for a written description of the officer's strengths, suggestions for improvement, and additional comments.

Program supervisors must receive evaluations by at least three administrators for each SRO—for example, a principal, assistant principal, and teacher. If the forms are not returned, Sergeant Tim Enos reminds the administrators to complete them. Supervisors total the ratings for an overall score and discuss it with the SROs.

The previous year, in his evaluation and year-end discussion with the SRO, an elementary school principal noted the need for the officer to get more comfortable with younger kids and relate to them—"Little kids are afraid of cops," the principal observed. The SRO needed to get into the lower grade classrooms, have a targeted program for them, and establish rapport with their teachers. The principal reported that the following year the SRO had improved considerably in this area. "Last year's evaluation meeting was very beneficial in producing this change." The principal also commented that teachers in effect give feedback on the SRO's teaching because "for them to give up a class a week to the SRO in this age of teacher accountability suggests that the SRO must be good."

Robyn Marinelli, the school district's supervisor of student services, periodically attends the captain's regular meetings with the SROs. "One big problem [that she brought up at these meetings] is that high school principals forget the SROs don't work for the school district. For example, the administrators want the SROs available for evening activities but can't make them come, so they call me and I call Captain Carney."

Marinelli and Carney also review each school at the end of the year but, because they talk regularly throughout the year, there are rarely any surprises in June.

School Administrator Criteria for Rating SRO Performance

Judgment: Ability to accurately assess situations and act accordingly.

Dependability: Can be counted on to perform assigned duties with little supervision.

Availability: Is accessible when needed and makes self visible on campus.

Handling of Non-Criminal Incidents: Handles miscellaneous incidents appropriately.

Conflict Resolution: (Students, Staff, Parents) Able to deescalate conflict situations.

Teamwork/Relationship with Faculty: Has established a rapport with, and is considered a part of, the administrative team.

Amount of Classroom Participation: Promotes SRO presentations, good classroom resource.

Involvement in School-Related Activities: (active in clubs, conferences, athletics, programs, etc.) Is active during and after school.

"Going the Extra Mile": Goes beyond what is expected.

Finally, the school district conducts an annual survey of students, parents, and teachers on school climate, including fear of crime. However, because usually 80-90 percent of respondents report feeling safe, Marinelli has never raised the survey results with Carney.

Case Study: Maury County, Tennessee, Sheriff's Department (61 sworn)

A captain spends about 20 percent of his time supervising the administration of the Maury County program, while two sergeants (who are also SROs) provide day-to-day supervision for nine SROs each. The department had tried having one lieutenant supervise the whole program but found that one person could not supervise 20 officers across the county's 612 square miles.

The sergeants are responsible for answering questions from their SROs, dealing with serious incidents at the schools, visiting the schools, and conducting SRO performance reviews. While all sergeants in the department are promoted through *the civil service process, the department added a requirement that candidates for SRO supervisor have experience as SROs to increase their competence.*

Supervisors monitor the SROs through:

- bi-weekly activity logs;
- weekly meetings; and
- annual evaluations that include participation by school administrators.

SRO Logs

The program monitors the day-to-day activities of SROs using detailed, comprehensive bi-weekly activity reports prepared by each officer. The 29 pieces of information called for in each report range from the number of offense reports completed, to the number of gang-related incidents investigated, to the number of advisory sessions held with students, parents, and teachers (see appendix F).

Supervising sergeants and the captain review the reports, making comparisons over time and across schools. The supervisors use the reports to identify potential problems. For example, when the number of assaults in a school increased and the number of hours the SRO was spending teaching decreased, a sergeant suggested the SRO spend more time teaching conflict resolution in an effort to decrease the level of violence in the school.

The department submits the reports to the county board of education and the county commission to document how SROs are spending their time. A county commissioner said, "The reports help the commission understand how productive the SROs really are and also demonstrate that SROs are not just dealing with students but also with the public."

Weekly Meetings

Every Wednesday for an hour the department holds a mandatory meeting at headquarters for all SROs and SRO supervisors that the sheriff also often attends. The primary purpose of the meeting is to bring all staff together to share information and discuss department and program-specific issues. The department also uses the meetings to provide brief presentations regarding recent trends or to invite a local service provider, such as the fire department, to discuss safety presentations that could be made at the schools at the SROs' request. The meetings serve an important supervisory function because ***they give SROs the opportunity to ask supervisors questions—and vice versa—and have in-person discussions about problems or trends.***

Performance Reviews

The sergeants review the SROs' performance twice a year, once informally and once formally (using a generic county government form used with all department deputies). During both reviews, sergeants meet with school administrators to discuss any problem areas and request that the administrators complete an SRO Development Report. This report asks administrators to rate the SROs on a 1-3 scale in 10 areas and to provide written comments as needed (see the box "Areas in Which School Administrators Rate SRO Performance").

Sample Evaluation Areas on Which School Administrators Rate SRO Performance

Attendance: Presents on job assignment when required; attends extracurricular activities

Human relations skills: Tactful with staff, children and the public

Personal appearance: Cleanliness and neatness of uniform

Knowledge of responsibilities: Understands and keeps current on laws, administrative orders, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations

Practical judgment: Capacity to handle self in routine and complicated situations, independent functioning

Problem-solving: Completes tasks without specific instruction and supervision

Instructional: Actively instructs safety, law related, or drug education classes

Advisor: Makes self available to meet with students, staff, and parents

Law enforcement: Takes appropriate action when necessary

Team-oriented: Motivates self to be a part of the overall school environment

Case Study: Palm Beach County, Florida, School District Police Department (149 Sworn)

Because the program must cover a 40-by-50 square mile area, the Palm Beach School District Police Department divides the county into geographic zones for supervision purposes, with one lieutenant each (the department has no sergeants) assigned to supervise 8-12 SROs and 10-15 schools in a single zone. A single lieutenant supervises most of the elementary school SROs regardless of zone.

Supervision

Supervisors monitor SROs in a number of ways, using:

- weekly activity logs;
- reviews of arrest reports;
- visits to schools;
- annual evaluations; and
- assessments from school administrators.

SRO Logs

Members of the department have to turn in to their supervisors a daily log of where they have been and why. SROs log in their time and place as they change activities and travel. SROs fax or drop off the logs on Mondays. According to one SRO, "My lieutenant has never questioned my logs, but having to fill them in makes sure SROs are where they're supposed to be."

Review of Arrest Reports

SROs submit all their arrest reports to their lieutenants, who may provide comments such as, "This was not well written," "You didn't provide enough evidence to sustain probable cause for this arrest," or "Maybe in the future you don't want to make an arrest again in this situation." Supervisors make SROs fix inadequate reports and, if necessary, require them take a course on report writing at a community college.

According to one supervisor, some new SROs were writing sub par reports and were reluctant to improve their writing, but he has been able to get them to write better reports. After one SRO had reread an old report he had written, he thanked the lieutenant because he saw the dramatic improvement between the earlier report and in his most recent reports.

Visits to Schools

Supervisors visit schools regularly. Some talk only with the SROs, but most visit school administrators while at the school. One administrator reported that he sees supervisors coming by frequently to check up on the SROs in his school.

Annual Evaluation

Each supervising lieutenant completes an annual evaluation for each SRO under his or her supervision (see appendix C in chapter 5, "Training SROs"—this is the same form that FTOs fill in daily and supervising lieutenants complete for 16 months while new SROs are still on probation). The evaluation covers 12 areas, ranging from appearance, to report writing, to interpersonal effectiveness with peers, administrators, students, and the community. Supervisors use a 7-point rating scale with 1 "not acceptable," 2 "development needed," 3-5 "acceptable," and 6-7 "superior." As illustrated in the box "Sample Guidelines for Completing Performance-Based Evaluation," there is an 11-page set of detailed guidelines that FTOs and supervisors follow in filling in the evaluation form. The supervisor shares his or her evaluation with the SRO, and both sign it before it goes up the chain of command.

A Day in the Life of an SRO Supervisor in the Palm Beach School District Police Department

Lieutenant Rob Woods supervises 10 SROs in 7 schools, plus their elementary feeder schools. Woods typically starts work between 7:00-7:30 a.m. by going to the high school, the busiest of his schools, to meet with the two SROs there to review any problems they may be experiencing, such as a gang-related problem or a shooting on a beach the night before that may spill over into the school. He also reviews any upcoming events to make sure there will be enough officers scheduled to cover them and to set up a plan to supervise the officers.

At 9:00 a.m., Woods goes to the next school, picking one that has had recent problems. Later in the day, he meets with the principals at the elementary schools on their needs and concerns—for example, a number of vehicle burglaries in one school, parents demanding things at another school, and parents wanting more police involvement at a third school. Sometimes, elementary principals call him with a problem, and he assigns an SRO to handle it.* Elementary school principals are told to call dispatch or him if they need help so that the SROs cannot claim, "I never got called"—an effort at holding the SROs accountable. Woods gets to about six schools on a typical day, driving 60-70 miles a day.

While at each school, Woods reviews the SROs' arrest reports to check their accuracy (e.g., application of the correct statute) and comprehensiveness ("some cops try to use shortcuts in reports, so I sometimes have to ask them to expand on them"). He reviews the reports at the schools with the SROs so he can give the officers immediate comments.

Wood's day officially ends at about 4:00 p.m. But at home he finishes paperwork that he usually does not have time to take care of during the day, ranging from nominating SROs for awards to memos to the captain on his exam schedule.

Woods also goes to after-school events, sometimes staying all evening or day (on weekends) at a single event or moving from event to event. In the case of a game involving two long-time rivals, he supervised 30 SROs handling 10,000 kids, making sure the SROs were appropriately assigned and looking out for potential danger. Woods coordinates with administrators or teachers assigned to the events, with access to the administrators' home phone numbers in case something happens.

*Because of geographic considerations, Woods is the only lieutenant responsible for the elementary schools in his geographic area along with the area's middle and high school SROs. Another lieutenant is responsible for the SROs in all the other elementary schools throughout the county.

Involvement of School Administrators

Supervisors meet with each school's principal at the end of each school year for an assessment of their SRO's performance that year. However, according to Kathleen Weigel, a high school principal, "While the lieutenant sits with me at the end of every year to evaluate my SRO, ***there is usually nothing new to say because the supervisor is at the school two or three times a week and, if there are issues, we talk about them at that time.*** So there are no surprises when the annual evaluation comes."

Sample Guidelines for Completing Performance-Based Evaluation

Appearance

Unacceptable—Dirty shoes and wrinkled uniform. Uniform fits poorly or is improperly worn

Acceptable—Uniform neat and clean, fits and is worn properly Shoes are shined.

Superior—Uniform neat, clean and properly pressed. Leather is shined and shoes are spit-shined. Displays command presence.

Report Writing

Unacceptable—Is unaware that a report or form needs to be completed/does not know what reports or forms to utilize.

Acceptable—Is aware of commonly used forms/reports and understands their function Completes with reasonable accuracy and thoroughness

Superior—Consistently makes accurate form selection and completes them without assistance

Interpersonal Skills

Unacceptable—Unable to properly establish communication lines with other [individuals whom the SRO has to work] Participates in conduct that has the potential to/or places the department in a negative light

Acceptable—Actively works at establishing positive relationships

Superior—Establishes excellent rapport with others Displays mastery in the resolution of conflicts.

Supervisor Selection and Training

As noted above, all supervisors are lieutenants—the department has no sergeants. Because lieutenants must come up through the ranks, all are former SROs with the department; about half have been FTOs in the department. Lieutenants have to have been in the department for at least two years and have earned 30 additional education credits.

Incentives to become a supervisor include unmarked take-home cruisers and a five percent pay raise. However, supervisors are on a 12-month schedule, because they have to cover summer schools, all of which are served by one or two department SROs.

To become eligible as a supervisor, an SRO has to:

- (1) be recommended by his or her supervisor (typically, a captain);
- (2) pass a written test on State and county law, the department's general orders and policies and procedures, and exercising leadership (the chief gives the applicant a reading list to study for the 100 multiple choice and true/false questions developed by a training consultant he hired to do the screening to keep himself out of the testing process);
- (3) role play scenarios in front of an interview panel of supervisors from other law enforcement agencies (see below); and
- (4) be interviewed and scored by a panel of department captains (the chief observes but does not score the applicant).

The department contracts with a professional assessment center to assemble the oral panel consisting of ranking officers from other nearby law enforcement agencies. Candidates respond from beginning to end to four scenarios. Scenarios have included:

- counseling a problem SRO,
- giving a presentation to parents,
- dealing with a disgruntled SRO,
- managing a shooting scene, and
- responding during a town hall meeting that erupts into a fight.

Applicants simulate the entire problem-solving exercise from planning to paperwork to final presentation. Panel members score applicants on a rating of 1-25 on each scenario.

Each of the four steps is a pass/fail test. When a position opens up, the chief interviews all the candidates and selects one to fill the opening. ***The newly appointed supervisor does a ride-along with experienced lieutenants for four days before assuming his or her new responsibilities*** and attends 40 hours of management training.

Plain Local School District, Stark County, Ohio, SRO Performance Rating Guidelines

PLAIN LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT APPRAISAL OF PERFORMANCE FOR SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

Name _____

Date: _____

Appraisal Period: From _____ through _____

[illegible]

EVALUATION TERMS	G	C	T	M	P	A	B	D	F	P	W	COMMENTS
1 = Meets standard of school district	O	C	A	I	V	V	A	A	R	C	A	
2 = Sometimes meets the standard	H		F	D	S	O	R	Y	A		R	
3 = Needs improvement	S		T	D	A	N	R	Z	Z		S	
III. CONSULTANT ROLE 1. Consults with school administration and staff on safety matters. 2. Investigates excessive absence of students. In consultation with the student's parents, discuss and advise them of legal requirements for school attendance.												
IV. COMMUNITY RELATIONS ROLE 1. Serves on the safe schools community committees to serve as a liaison between school and law enforcement agency. 2. Maintains contact with Plain Local students who must appear in Juvenile Court by authorities for criminal or alleged criminal behavior.												
V. CRISIS INTERVENTION ROLE 1. Assists in mediating disputes in a non-violent manner. 2. Assists in revising, monitoring and implementing crisis intervention plan. 3. Assists in time of crisis.												
VI. PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES 1. Adjusts to changes in procedure. 2. Accepts criticism or recognition gracefully.												

1 = Meets standard of school district
2 = Sometimes meets the standard
3 = Needs improvement

3. Grows professionally through study and participation in professional activities.
4. Works understandingly and cooperatively with teachers, administrators, fellow workers, and parents
5. Promotes respect and takes pride in the profession.
6. Is loyal toward school policies and procedures.
7. Avoids taking negative comments into the community.
8. Is discreet concerning confidential material and information.

SUMMARY OF APPRAISAL

Signature of Appraiser:

Signature of Evaluator:

Date:

Date:

Appendix B

Olympia, Washington, Police Department SRO Evaluation Form



OLYMPIA POLICE DEPARTMENT SRO EVALUATION FORM

S.R.O. NAME:

Date:

School:

Rating Period From: To:

Evaluator's Name:

INSTRUCTIONS

After carefully reading the performance traits listed below, the evaluator should rate the SRO by placing a check in the space provided. The evaluator may write related comments in the space provided beneath each factor.

At the conclusion of the evaluation, there is space available for the evaluator to include additional comments concerning the SRO's overall performance, this evaluation instrument, or the SRO program.

1. **Job Knowledge: The information concerning work duties which an SRO should know to satisfactorily complete job assignments.**

- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Needs Improvement
- ☐ Not Effective

Comments:

2. **Attitude: The SRO's personal orientation, disposition, and general outlook toward work assignments, school employees, students, and the public.**

- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Needs Improvement
- ☐ Not Effective

Comments:

3. **Dependability: The SRO is prompt, regularly in attendance and communicates his work schedule.**

- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Needs Improvement
- ☐ Not Effective

Comments:

4. **Uses Effective Instructional Methods:**

- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Needs Improvement
- ☐ Not Effective

Comments:

5. **Does the SRO perform appropriate non-instructional functions necessary to the total school program:**

- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Needs Improvement
- ☐ Not Effective

Comments:

6. **Does the SRO intervene with students in an effective manner:**

- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Needs Improvement
- ☐ Not Effective

Comments:

7. **Evaluator's overall comments concerning SRO Program, SRO's performance, or evaluation suggestions:**

Appendix C

Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Police Department SRO Evaluation Form

School Resource Officer Evaluation

To be completed by the Principal, or designee, of SRO's assigned school.

Officer _____ School _____

Date _____ Reviewer _____

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	------------	-------	----------------

Dependability					
Officer is at school when scheduled?					
Officer notifies personnel of schedule changes?					
Officer is on time for scheduled events?					
Can be counted on to perform duties with little or no supervision?					
Availability					
Officer is accessible to Staff and Students?					
Responds to requests in a timely manner?					
Attitude					
Displays positive, optimistic attitude?					
Officer presents a professional appearance?					
Officer is self-motivated / willing to take on new tasks?					
Officer works well with Staff and Administration?					
Officer appears committed to the School and Community?					
Officer accepts advice and criticism well?					
Officer is an effective Teacher...?					
A. Control of classroom					
B. Content of classes					
C. Preparation					
D. Interest in students					
Officer as an effective Counselor....?					
A. Officer is a good listener?					
B. Has good communication skills?					
C. Effective problem solver?					
Officer takes a proactive approach when appropriate?					
Officer uses good judgement?					

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know	Agree	Strongly Agree
Officer is knowledgeable...?					
A. About State and Local Law					
B. About School Rules					
C. About the Criminal Justice System					
D. About local resources					
E. Job and duties on campus					
Officer takes proper law enforcement action when appropriate?					
Officer provides acceptable level of visibility?					
Officer's presence contributes to a higher perception of safety?					
Officer encourages input from the School and the Community?					
Officer meets the expectations of the faculty and Administration?					

Comments or Concerns:

Please return this form to:

Supervisor _____
 Department _____
 St. Address _____
 City / State / Zip _____
 Telephone _____

Received Date _____
 Reviewed By _____
 Reviewed Date _____

Action Taken:
 Filed _____
 Filed & Forwarded Up-line _____

Appendix D

Sarasota, Florida, Sheriff's Office StarTrac Crime
Statistics for One High School

Sarasota Sheriff's Office
STARTRAC
Excellence Through Accountability

CRIME STATISTICS FOR BOOKER HIGH SCHOOL

	CURRENT REPORTING PERIOD ASSIGNED	PREVIOUS REPORTING PERIOD ASSIGNED	DIFF +/-	YTD ASSIGNED	PREVIOUS YTD ASSIGNED	DIFF +/-	PERCENT CHANGE
Alcohol	0	1	(1)	1	0	1	#DIV/0!
AOA	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Arson	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Assault	0	0	0	1	0	1	#DIV/0!
Baker Act	1	1	0	2	0	2	#DIV/0!
Battery	2	4	(2)	8	4	4	100.00%
Bomb Threat	0	0	0	0	1	(1)	-100.00%
Burglary - Structure	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Burglary - Vehicle	0	1	(1)	1	0	1	#DIV/0!
Child Abuse	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Criminal Mischief	0	0	0	0	1	(1)	-100.00%
Dis.School Function	0	1	(1)	1	0	1	#DIV/0!
Disturbance	0	0	0	0	1	(1)	-100.00%
Drugs	1	2	(1)	4	11	(7)	-63.64%
Firearms	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Grand Theft	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Homicide	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Kidnapping	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Lewd & Lasc.	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Missing/ Runaway	0	0	0	0	2	(2)	-100.00%
Petit Theft	0	1	(1)	3	17	(14)	-82.35%
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Sexual Battery	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Suspicious Inc.	1	0	1	2	0	2	#DIV/0!
Trespass	2	0	2	2	4	(2)	-50.00%
Truancy	0	5	(5)	5	0	5	#DIV/0!
Weapons-Other	0	1	(1)	1	0	1	#DIV/0!
Other:	1	3	(2)	7	8	(1)	-12.50%
TOTALS:	6	20	(14)	38	49	(11)	-22.45%

Appendix E

Sarasota, Florida, Sheriff's Office StarTrac Crime Statistics for Schools Countywide



Sarasota Sheriff's Office
STARTRAC
Excellence Through Accountability



CRIME STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS COUNTYWIDE

	CURRENT REPORTING PERIOD ASSIGNED	PREVIOUS REPORTING PERIOD ASSIGNED	DIFF +/-	YTD ASSIGNED	PREVIOUS YTD ASSIGNED	DIFF +/-	PERCENT CHANGE
Alcohol	1	3	(2)	5	0	5	#DIV/0!
AOA	26	25	1	63	63	0	0.00%
Arson	0	1	(1)	1	7	(6)	-85.71%
Assault	3	1	2	7	10	(3)	-30.00%
Baker Act	9	7	2	25	20	5	25.00%
Battery	34	28	6	100	180	(80)	-44.44%
Bomb Threat	1	0	1	2	4	(2)	-50.00%
Burglary - Structure	0	0	0	0	7	(7)	-100.00%
Burglary - Vehicle	3	1	2	5	4	1	25.00%
Child Abuse	2	0	2	3	4	(1)	-25.00%
Criminal Mischief	13	13	0	35	58	(23)	-39.66%
Dis.School Function	16	23	(7)	59	0	0	#DIV/0!
Disturbance	51	39	12	104	278	(174)	-62.59%
Drugs	17	17	0	40	74	(34)	-45.95%
Firearms	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Grand Theft	3	4	(1)	15	14	1	7.14%
Homicide	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Kidnapping	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Lewd & Lasc.	2	2	0	6	11	(5)	-45.45%
Missing/ Runaway	7	4	3	23	24	(1)	-4.17%
Petit Theft	70	64	6	194	192	2	1.04%
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Sexual Battery	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Suspicious Inc.	17	27	(10)	59	91	(32)	-35.16%
Trespass	15	13	2	38	51	(13)	-25.49%
Truancy	4	15	(11)	39	24	15	62.50%
Weapons-Other	10	6	4	19	9	10	111.11%
Other:	16	27	(11)	61	89	(28)	-31.46%
TOTALS:	320	320	0	903	1214	(311)	-25.62%

Appendix F

**Maury County, Tennessee, Sheriff's Department SRO
Bi-Weekly Activity Report**

Maury County Sheriff's Dept. - School Resource Officer Bi-Weekly Activity Report

School : _____

Pay Period: _____

Activity:

		Wk 1	Wk 2	TOTAL	Last Total	YTD TOTAL
1. Offense Reports, Supplements, (All Case# Reports)	1					
2. Juvenile Activity Reports, General Incidents	2					
3. Adult Felony Arrests	3					
4. Adult Misdemeanor Arrests Including Citations	4					
5. Adult Drug Arrests	5					
6. Juvenile Felony Arrests	6					
7. Juvenile Misdemeanor Arrests Including Citations	7					
8. Juvenile Drug Arrests	8					
9. Traffic Citations Issued	9					
10. Traffic Warnings Issued (Verbal & Written)	10					
11. Trespass Warnings Issued	11					
12. Gang Related Incidents	12					
13. Assist Other Officer	13					
14. Advisory Sessions with Students (School Related)	14					
15. Advisory Sessions with Students (Family Related)	15					
16. Advisory Sessions with Students (Law Enforcement Related)	16					
17. Advisory Sessions with Parents	17					
18. Advisory Sessions with Teachers/School Staff	18					
19. Conflict Resolution/De-escalations	19					
20. Classroom Lectures	20					
21. Call-outs from Class	21					
22. Special Events Attended (Games, etc.)	22					
23. Meetings Attended (School, Community, Business, etc.)	23					
24. Referrals or Assist Other Agencies (YSO, DHS, etc.)	24					
25. Suicide or Other Crisis Interventions	25					
26. Court Appearances (Including depositions)	26					
27. Motorists Assists (Jump starts, escorts, etc.)	27					
28. Other:	28					
29. POV Mileage *Do Not use in Column Activity Calculation!	29					

Total Calls for Service:

Weapons Confiscated (Type, date, case #): _____

Value of Reported Stolen Property: _____

Value of Recovered Stolen Property: _____

Comments/Significant Events: _____

Deputy: _____

Deputy Signature _____